

**IN THE SPECIFICATION:**

Please amend paragraph [22] beginning on page 5 as follows;

a<sup>1</sup>  
A wheel end assembly 28 is shown in Figure 2. The wheel end assembly 28 includes a spindle 32 or other support shaft member that defines a wheel axis of rotation 30. As discussed above, the wheel end assembly 28 can be used on either a driving or non-driving axle. The wheel end assembly 28 further includes a first wheel hub 38 and a second wheel hub 40 that are supported adjacent to each other on the spindle 32 via first and second bearing members further defined as bearings 34a, 34b. Typically, taper roller bearings are used for heavy-duty applications. Further, it should be understood that the bearings 34a, 34b can be the same but do not have to be equal with each other.

Please amend paragraph [23] beginning on page 6 as follows;

a<sup>2</sup>  
A third bearing member 50 is mounted between the hubs 38, 40 to permit the hubs 38, 40 to rotate relative to one another about the axis 30. Preferably, the third bearing member 50 is solely supported between the hubs 38, 40, i.e., the third bearing member 50 is not supported on the spindle 32 [[42]]. The third bearing member 50 is mounted on opposing faces 42, 44 of the hubs 38, 40 and is not supported by the spindle 32. Wheel rims 46 are mounted to each hub 38, 40 and the tires 24a, 24b are mounted to the respective rims 46. A fastening assembly is used to hold the assembly together on the spindle 32. Preferably, a nut 48 mounted on the outer end of the spindle 32 retains the hubs 38, 40 in the proper axial location and prevents any linear movement along the axis 30. While the [[a]] nut 48 is preferred, other known fasteners could also be used.

Please amend paragraph [25] beginning on page 6 as follows;

a<sup>3</sup>  
Preferably, the third bearing member 50 is positioned between the bearings 34a, 34b [[34]] and has a diameter that extends a greater radial distance away from the axis 30 than the diameters of the bearings 34a, 34b supported by the spindle 32.

Please amend paragraph [26] beginning on page 6 as follows;

ad  
Any suitable type of bearing member known in the art can be used for the third bearing member 50, however, the preferred bearing configuration is a bushing 52, as shown in Figure 3, ~~that~~ The bushing 52 is mounted between the first 38 and second 40 wheel hubs and axially and radially engages the first 38 and second 40 wheel hubs relative to the axis 30 to support ~~supports~~ bi-directional axial and radial loads. The bushing 52 includes first 52a and second 52b abutting surfaces perpendicular to one another. The first abutting surface 52a axially engages the first wheel hub 38 relative to the axis 30. The second abutting surface 52b radially engages the first wheel hub 38 relative to the axis 30. The bushing also includes first 52c and second 52d bearing surfaces perpendicular to one another and parallel to the first 52a and second 52b abutting surfaces, respectively. The first bearing surface 52c axially engages the second wheel hub 40 relative to the axis 30. The second bearing surface 52d radially engages the second wheel hub 40 relative to the axis 30. The bushing 52 can be made from a single type of material or can include a coating. For example, the bushing 52 can be a typical bronze bushing such as that found in traditional planet pinion shafts or a nylon-coated steel bushing.

Please amend paragraph [29] beginning on page 7 as follows;

ns  
An alternative embodiment of a wheel end assembly 80 is shown in Figure 7, illustrating that the concept can be extended to more than two wheels. This wheel end assembly 80 includes an outer wheel hub 82, a middle wheel hub 84, and an inner wheel hub 86. The inner 86 and outer 82 hubs are supported on the spindle 32 via first and second bearing members, e.g., bearings 86a, 86b, for rotation about the axis 30. It should be understood that the bearings 86a, 86b can be the same but do not have to be equal with each other. The fastening assembly retains the hubs 82, 84, 86 on the spindle 32. Wheel rims 46 are mounted to each of the hubs 82, 84, 86 as is known in the art. ~~Bearing~~ Third and fourth bearing members 88a, 88b are positioned between the hubs 82, 84, 86 to allow independent rotation of the hubs 82, 84, 86 relative to each other. A-first The third bearing member 88a is positioned between the inner 86 and middle 84 hubs and the fourth ~~a-second~~ bearing member

Applicant: Chung, I-Chao  
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cont.  
AS  
88b is positioned between the outer 82 and middle hubs 84. The bearing members 88a, 88b are similar to those discussed above with regard to Figure 2.

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Please amend paragraph [30] beginning on page 8 as follows;

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AS  
The subjection invention provides a multiple wheel end assembly with independently rotating wheel hubs that greatly reduces tire wear, ~~increase~~ increases fuel economy, improves vehicle stability, and reduces premature wheel end component wear.

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